

# DJS Healthbeat Monthly Circular

DJS

## Knowledge Is Power: State Of Maryland's Employee Wellness Initiative



StateStat is a performance-measurement and management tool implemented by Governor O'Malley to make our state government more accountable and more efficient.

Through a process of continually evaluating State performance at the highest levels, opportunities to improve coordination and formulate strategies are ongoing.

One of the areas that now falls under this performance-measurement is State Employee Wellness Stat. We as a state are looking at our health and ways that we can improve on it, beginning at work.

Last week you all should have received an all staff email that discussed current issues such as smoke cessation and ChopChop Maryland which offers healthy recipes. These are just a couple of the tools that a great team of state employees developed and there is more to come.

There are things that you can do as well like share your ideas, with management, with staff and with me. Send your inspiring stories and helpful tips to me via email and I would be happy to add them to our newsletter!

Remember this is all about us DJS! Take the tips, use the information on the websites given to you by your health insurance company to get free assistance and information. Share what you

learn. Remember knowledge is power. It may just be several little tips that we learn and if we do them consistently we will start to see major changes in our lives, like improvement in our health, weight loss, increased energy, and a happier, more optimistic you!

Just motivating those around you can help you stick to your plan whether you are quitting smoking, losing weight, trying to get your family eating better and doing more activities. Take the tips home and use them to help make your family the happiest, healthiest that it can be.

Be a part of Healthy Maryland, take the challenge!

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### Special points of interest:

- *Asthma and the Heat..*
- *Teen Sports Injuries.*
- *Chiggers.*
- *Men's Health Part V.*
- *Blueberries, A Superfood!*
- *Healthy Recipe.*
- *Inspiring Story.*
- *Summer Sports.*

### Inside this issue:

<i>Vital Signs</i>	2
<i>Common Sense</i>	2
<i>Ask A Nurse</i>	2
<i>Special Feature</i>	3
<i>Fun Facts</i>	3
<i>Healthy Recipe</i>	3
<i>About The Season</i>	4

## July Is Tobacco Cessation Awareness Month



Tobacco use leads to nicotine dependence and serious health problems. Tobacco dependence is a chronic condition that often requires several attempts to quit, but there are effective treatments

and resources that exist. According to the CDC, today there are more former smokers than current smokers.

People who stop smoking greatly reduce their risk for disease and premature death. Although the health benefits are greater for those who stop at earlier ages, cessation is beneficial at all ages.

The combination of medication

and counseling is more effective for smoking cessation than either medication or counseling alone.

If you are currently a smoker and are looking for help quitting, visit DHMH Quitline.

1-800-Quit-Now or go to

[Www.Smokingstopshere.com](http://Www.Smokingstopshere.com)

## Vital Signs: Breathing Easy?

Managing asthma on a regular basis is difficult enough, but when you add in extreme heat, humidity and high levels of pollen it makes it even harder. Many doctors lately have seen more serious breathing problems, including asthma attacks. Several patients have required emergency treatment, including breathing tubes.

The heat wave that we've been experiencing this summer has hit everyone hard causing heat related illnesses such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke, but when you add in chronic health problems like asthma it increases the

dangers tremendously.

Persons with asthma should be kept in air conditioning as much as possible. Make sure that you have the medicine that you need at all times. Drink plenty of fluids throughout the day as well. If you have elderly neighbors, make sure that someone is checking on them. Whether they have asthma, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) or anything else, extreme heat will effect them first.

Also, if you have young children who are asthmatics, make sure that you are keeping a close eye on them as well. They tend to run

off with their friends and play and they are usually not carrying any medicine with them. Their friends most likely won't know what to do if something happens. Educate your child on the problems they could face if they are not careful, on the signs and symptoms of asthma and the triggers that they should avoid to keep from having any problems. Especially if you have a child that is not managed well on medication.



## Common Sense: Summer Injuries In Our Youth

Injuries can be prevented. But safety takes patience. You and your family have to decide what is acceptable and unacceptable, safe and dangerous. Below are some facts to know:

- Injuries kill more teens than all diseases combined.
- Car crashes are one of the leading causes of death and disability among teens today.
- At least one teen dies of an injury every hour every day in the U.S.
- Other causes of death or injury among teens are drowning and sports injuries.
- More teens are being killed by guns than ever before.
- Most teens do not like to wear bike helmets.
- Adolescents are less likely to use seat belts than any other age group.
- Understanding and obeying rules of the road are important for safe cycling.
- Alcohol is involved in about 35% of teen

driver fatalities.

Here are a few tips to help you and your family decide your safety zone:

- Set clear rules for driving or riding in a car.
- If your teen wants to ride a bike, then a helmet must be worn.
- Do not allow your teen to swim or boat alone.
- Encourage your teen to wear protective sports gear.

## Ask A Nurse: What Are Chiggers?

Chiggers are the juvenile form (larvae) of a certain type of mite. Mites are arachnids (like spiders and ticks). They are most commonly found in the woods, grassy fields, gardens, parks and most areas around lakes and rivers. They thrive well in humidity and they are found on plants that are close to the ground.

A chigger bite itself is not noticeable. Usually 1-3 hours after the chigger has injected digestive enzymes into the skin symptoms typically begin. Some of the most common symptoms

are listed below:

- Intense itching is the most common symptom.
- The area of the bite becomes reddened, flat, or raised, sometimes it may look like a blister.
- And is most intense 1-2 days after the bite.
- This will continue for several days, and the skin lesions should clear up within two weeks.

Tips for prevention:

- Wash with soap and water after outdoor activities.
- Wash the clothes that you wore during the outdoor activity as well.
- Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts with socks and boots if you are planning to go into any of the areas listed above.
- Insect repellent will help keep them at bay as well.



## Men's Health Part V, Prostate and Testicular Disease



One in six men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer at some point in their lives. Currently about 30 million American men suffer from some type of prostate disorder that significantly impairs their health.

Testicular diseases tend to occur less frequently, but they are no less serious. Of the 8, 250 men diagnosed with testicular cancer annually, about 5% will die as a result of the condition.

Men between the ages of 20-54 years old have the highest risk of developing testicular cancer.

cer.

While age is one risk factor, there are others which include:

- Diet and weight-Eating a high-fat diet or being overweight or obese.
- Ethnicity-African American men are at a higher risk for developing prostate disorders, where Caucasian men are at a higher risk for developing testicular disorders.
- Family History-You are at a higher risk if your father or brother had prostate or

testicular disease.

- Testosterone levels-Men on testosterone therapy or who have naturally high levels of testosterone are more likely to develop one of these disorders.
- Other factors such as a man who smokes, has HIV or has undescended testicles is at a higher risk.

To maintain optimal prostate health it is imperative that men get regular prostate exams by their doctors. Men should also ask their physician how to do self testicular exams and how often and when is the best time to do

## Interesting Facts About Blueberries

Blueberries are a superfood! They are at the top of the list actually. They are packed with antioxidants and phytoflavonoids (these are compounds that protect our bodies from stress). Blueberries are high in potassium and vitamin C which make them one of the top choices of doctors and nutritionists.

Not only can blueberries lower your risk of heart disease and cancer, they are also considered an anti-inflammatory (they help decrease swelling). Inflammation is a major player in all chronic diseases.

The next time that you go shopping, select

berries that are darker in color, the darker they are the more anti-oxidants they have.



A serving a day (approximately 1/2 cup) is just what you need, and it's a great snack when you have the munchies. Frozen are just as good as

fresh. You could even add them to other foods like yogurt or make a smoothie.

Don't forget to add lots of other fruits and

vegetables to your diet as well. And in general, with all fruits and vegetables, the more color they have, the more antioxidants they have!

See the great healthy blueberry recipe below and check other web sites for more fun healthy recipes that use blueberries and many other fruits and vegetables.

<http://dhmh.maryland.gov/chopchopmd/sitepages/recipes.aspx> is a great site brought to use by DHMH specifically for Maryland and using our local produce.

## The Food of the Month of July Is Blueberries

This month's healthy recipe is: Sugar Free Blueberry Coffee Cake! Diabetic friendly!

Ingredients:

- 3/4 c butter, melted and cooled.
- 1 c milk.
- 3 eggs.
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract.
- 1 1/2 c granular sucralose sweetener (such as Splenda).
- 2 tsp. baking powder.
- 3 c all-purpose flour.

- 1 3/4 c fresh or frozen blueberries.
- 1 1/2 c malitol brown sugar substitute.
- 3/4 c flour.
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon.
- 1/2 c butter, softened.

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease and flour a 9X13 inch baking pan.
2. In a large bowl, stir together the melted butter, milk, eggs, vanilla and 1 1/2 c sugar substitute. Combine 3 c of flour and baking powder; stir into the wet in-

gredients until blended. Fold in the blueberries. Spread evenly in the prepared pan.

3. In a small bowl, stir together the brown sugar substitute, 3/4 c of flour, and cinnamon. Stir in the softened butter with a fork until the mixture is crumbly. Sprinkle over top of the cake.
4. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes in the oven, until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean. This cake is best served warm.

Ready in 55 minutes, serves 12.

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KEEP THE BEAT ALIVE!



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## Food For Thought

### From One DJS Employee To Another

#### "Inspiring and Motivating Each Other"

*As a Weight Watcher leader, our own Nancy Seidman says, "I enjoy using my own changes to motivate others. It took me years to get where I am." "I now eat more fruits and vegetables every day, Greek yogurt, and low fat protein and I have swapped all my white flour foods for whole wheat. No more sugar highs and lows or feeling like a slug." Nancy says her new motto is, "Lots of little changes to make a big change!"*

*Thank you Nancy and good luck with your journey.*

## About The Season: Summer Sports, Stay Cool!



Let's keep it real, some sports like running, football, and other great sports are just too much during the long hot summer. There are water sports that will keep your kids interested and having fun all summer though like swimming, waterboarding, wakeboarding, jet skiing, boating.

Although they are a lot of fun, just remember each one brings with it its own risk of injury. There are certain things to remember about all water sports:

- Wait 30 minutes after eating a meal before getting into the water.

- Never drink alcohol and operate any mechanical vehicle including boats, jet skis and scuba equipment.
- Do not try to push too hard, especially if you are tired. People usually injure themselves seriously late in the day when they are tired.

Proper instruction and prevention are the best ways to enjoy an excellent summer sport:

- Make sure that you have a trained professional teaching you or your young athlete.
- Always wear a life jacket when boating or jet skiing.
- For adolescents and younger, make sure they wear a helmet whenever it is required or recommended (they are in an

age group where concussion rates are high and they take longer to heal).

- Make sure whoever is driving the boat is sober and knows the rules of the water.
  - If you're scuba diving, get certified.
  - Wear a diving suit to avoid cuts and abrasions.
  - Keep first aid kits on hand for minor cuts and abrasions.
  - Make sure that someone in the area knows CPR.
  - Follow all of the rules of the summer sport you are playing.
  - Make sure you are wearing the proper equipment that is fitted for you.
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